

THE
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For the American Sunday School Magazine.

QUESTIONS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN.—NO. VI.

(Continued from page 53.)

You heard of that good man Abraham, who left his own country when God told him, and went to a strange place, believing that all should turn out as God had said. When he came from his own country, and some time afterwards he had no children, but yet he believed God that his family should be great, and so many that they could not be counted; and this *believing* in what the Lord said, though he could not tell how it was to be brought about, was called *faith*: so Abraham was called the father of the faithful; all good people who believe in God and Jesus Christ, and are willing to mind God's laws, are reckoned children of Abraham; *you* will be his children if you do so, and then you may not only call *Abraham* your father, but *God* too, and he will be with you and be your God. Now remember, the faithful are those who believe in Jesus Christ, and keep his commandments: to be faithful is to believe.

God kept his promise to Abraham, as he will to all that believe him; and Sarah, Abraham's wife had a son, whom they named Isaac. Isaac grew to be a young man, and his father and mother loved him very much; but though Abraham loved his son dearly, he loved God *more*. For we must love God with *all* our heart, and *soul*, and *strength*; and our Lord Jesus Christ says, "If any man love father or mother more than me, he is not worthy of me." One day God

called to Abraham and said, "Take now thy son, thine *only* son Isaac, *whom thou lovest*, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountains." Do you remember what burnt offerings were?

Before I go on with the story, I shall see if you know any thing of what I have told you.

Who told Abraham to leave his own country?

Do you remember the name of his country?

Did Abraham know what sort of a place he was going to?

What made him go?

Had Abraham any children when he left his own country?

What did God promise him about his family?

As he had no children and was quite an old man, did he *believe* that?

What is believing in God's word called?

If any one tells us "there is a tree or a house," and we see there *is* a tree or a house, and so believe him, is *that* faith?

What *is* faith?

To believe what God says, though you cannot see it, or perhaps understand it: you cannot see God, or heaven, or hell, but believe these things and you have faith.

When God told Abraham to go out of his own land, and he would give him another land and make him so great; if he had said, "I believe God

that there *is* such a land, and that if I go there, God will keep his word with me; but I don't want to leave my own country, and so I shall stay where I am:" would he have been called faithful? No, he would *not*: he could not then really have believed God, for those who believe in God obey his word.

So if *you* say you believe in God, and in heaven, and in hell, and yet you do not mind God, nor try to get to heaven, nor to get clear of hell, I cannot think you have faith, you only fancy you believe.

What was Abraham called for his faith?

Who are reckoned children of Abraham?

If we are by faith the children of Abraham, whose children shall we be besides?

Now who are the faithful, the *true* children of Abraham?

What is it to be faithful?

Did God keep his promise to Abraham?

What was the name of his wife, and of their son?

Did Abraham love Isaac?

Who did he love more?

How does the Bible say we must love God?

What does our Lord Jesus Christ say, about those who love any thing more than him?

They who *know* God, will be *sure* to love him. I am afraid you don't *know* him, or you would love him as Abraham did.

What did the Lord tell Abraham to do with his son Isaac?

What is a burnt offering?

What is an altar?

Was Abraham to kill Isaac?

Now Abraham did not complain, and say, "I can't kill my son, I love him too much, and if I kill him, how shall I be made a great nation:" but the Bible says, Abraham got up *early* in the morning, and took Isaac his son, and the wood for the burnt offering, and went to the place God told him of: he was three days going, for it was a good way off from his own home, and yet in all that time he did not repent of minding God; for very likely he thought, "When I came out from my own people and

trusted God, he was true to his word; and though I had no children for so long, yet he gave me at last this son; and now I am sure he will keep his promise, even though he should bring Isaac to life again." So he built an altar of stones, and laid the wood on it, and Isaac who stood by him said, "My father, see the fire and the wood, but where is the *lamb* for a burnt offering;" and Abraham said, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." And then Abraham took Isaac and tied him fast, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood; and Isaac, like the blessed Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, when he was bound and crucified, was patient, and we do not read that he said one word. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to kill his son as the Lord had bid him do: and the angel of God called to him out of heaven, "Abraham, Abraham:" and he said, "Here am I." And the angel said, "Lay not thy hand upon Isaac, neither do any thing to him; for now I *know* that thou fearest God, since thou hast not kept back thy son, thine only son from me." And now God blessed Abraham again, and told him since he had loved and obeyed him so well as to be willing to give up his own son, he would again promise that his children, and his children's children should be blessed, and the Saviour should be born of them.

So Abraham turned and saw a ram caught by his horns in the bushes, and he took that, and offered it up instead of his son, and he and Isaac went home again.

And now remember that God did not let Abraham *kill* his son, but in mercy spared him; but God so loved us sinful creatures, that when we were only fit for eternal death, he *spared not* his *own* son Jesus Christ, but gave him up to be beaten, spit upon, mocked, and nailed to a cross, to save us from hell; that whosoever will look to Jesus and believe, might not die eternally but have everlasting life.

Did Abraham refuse to do what God told him?

Did he wait and consider till mid-day?

What did he take with him?

How many days was he going?

Did he repent in all that time and turn back?

What did he think God could do, even if he killed Isaac?

Who did Isaac belong to?

Had not the Lord a right to take him when he pleased?

When Abraham got to the place what did he do?

Did Isaac know who was to be sacrificed?

What did he say to his father?

What did Abraham answer?

What did he do with Isaac then?

How did Isaac believe?

Who was he like in this?

And what did Abraham take to kill his son?

Did he kill him?

How was he stopped?

What did he answer?

What did the angel tell him?

Did the Lord *at first* mean that he should kill his son?

Why did he tell him to offer his son? to see how much he loved and feared him, and to show us how much a *true* servant of God is willing to give up for his master.

What was Abraham willing to give up?

And now what did God again promise him?

Who did he say should be born of his family?

Then did Abraham offer no sacrifice after all?

And then what became of him and Isaac?

Who was not only *willing* to offer up his son, but *did* offer him up?

How was the Son of God treated?

And did he bear it patiently?

And you when you are found fault with and *deserve* it, are you patient?

Where was the need of Christ's sufferings? we are all sinners, and sin must be punished; but to save us, God's own son came in the flesh and died for us.

If he had *not*, should we have any hope of going to heaven?

Who *now* have a hope of eternal life?

Those who *say* they believe on Je-

sus, and do not keep his commandments?

WILLIAMSBURGH, VIRGINIA.

Report for 1826.

Again has the time arrived when we are to address our fellow labourers in the Lord, and it is with great satisfaction and pleasure we inform them, that through the blessing of our heavenly Father, our school is still in a flourishing condition. Since we last wrote, many have been added to our number, the aggregate of which amounts to 115; the regular attendants are between 80 and 90. The children are very attentive, and appear anxious to improve; some, we hope have had serious impressions made on their infant minds, which we trust will sink deeper and deeper, and that through the blessing of God, our labour will not be in vain. One little boy, just entering his 12th year, has received we hope deep and lasting impressions. During an illness last summer, he became extremely anxious about his soul, he thought he should die, and frequently asked if there was any hope of his being happy hereafter; he was continually praying, and afraid of doing or saying that which was sinful. He is now, although much ridiculed and scoffed at by some of his school-fellows, and many grown persons, still solicitous to become acquainted with the truths of the Bible, and to avoid all sin: he will not partake of the amusements of the other boys, such as going to dances, playing marbles in the street, or profaning the sabbath day; but after his evening school, he returns home to read his Bible to his mother. His parents encourage him in his religious duties, and we trust he will continue to persevere and become a child of God, and an heir of heaven. There have been two or three teachers added to our school, as the number of scholars has increased.

Oh! my friends, what a blessing it is, that whilst many of our fellow creatures have been summoned from time to eternity, we have been spared as the monuments of God's mercy and goodness. Should we then he-

sitate to devote our days to his glory, and the benefit of our fellow creatures? have we not the arms of Jehovah to support us? and has he not promised to be with us, and reward us? can his words fail? "heaven and earth shall pass away, before my words shall pass away," saith the Lord; therefore, "let us be diligent in well doing," and "pray without ceasing." Should we not be more zealous and active, when we find that our own souls too are benefited, and when we remember we shall be called to render an account for every mispent sabbath? Much good has been done to the souls of sabbath school teachers, and we trust some have received much benefit from attending *our* school, and we hope more will, and that God will still let his Spirit strive to accomplish the work of grace in all our hearts, and that in his hands we may be the instruments of good to our fellow creatures.

CHURCH MUSIC.—NO. III.

"Bestowed by heaven; but seldom understood."

The question whether the music of the ancients was, necessarily, more interesting to them, than modern music is to the moderns, is a perfectly idle one. It has occasioned some discussion; but, the slightest examination of specimens, is sufficient to convince us that we shall never be equal to its solution. A considerable portion of the music of our immediate predecessors, is now scarcely listened to with patience; that which preceded it, is still less interesting; and, making our own taste the standard, the interest continues to decline to the remotest specimens. Yet every age has been more or less pleased with its own music, and, like the one in which we live, has complained of former insipidity, and deprecated the encroachments of innovation. The truth is, the work of cultivation, which is in every thing, more or less progressive, has proved so in music, to a peculiar degree; and the remark is equally true in relation to ages, nations, provinces, and individuals. The idea of excellence, when applied to the progressive stages of the art,

is wholly relative; but wherever legitimate effects have been extensively produced, there has been excellence of a nature sufficiently absolute for the temporary purposes of the institution; and the objects of music, like those of eloquence, may have been sufficiently answered, though the pride of genius, which looks to futurity, may have been disappointed.

We need not wonder that the music of the ancients, has lost its original significancy; and it seems reasonable to expect, that much of what is now in favour, will hereafter pass through the stages of indifference, and insipidity, and finally be lost in forgetfulness. In uttering this sentiment, we would not be misunderstood. We do not impute to the musical art, a fickleness of character that would render it subservient to the caprices and prejudices of the community; its changes depend upon its progressive nature, and, like those in languages and dialects, are effected by gradual improvements that are scarcely perceptible, except when compared with specimens of a preceding period. The preservation of such specimens serves to mark the various stages of its progress; and although they cannot be expected always to continue in favour, yet they will continue as standards of reference, and as the permanent basis of subsequent improvement.

But the progress of cultivation has, by no means, been regular or uninterrupted; nor has there been any thing like regularity of succession or alternation in the revivals or declensions of the art. These have taken place in unequal intervals of time, and through the operation of various causes, as will appear from the details of modern music. I shall notice but few of the most important incidents, and for these I am chiefly indebted to the laborious researches of the late Dr. Burney.

It has been already mentioned that the first promulgators of the Christian religion, were in circumstances that could not admit of musical cultivation; and history warrants the same conclusion respecting their immediate successors. With them, the musical art was in a state of infancy, and

they made no characteristic distinction between its secular and sacred departments. Even in Origen's time, they are represented as singing hymns to the Supreme Being and his only Son, in the same manner as the heathen were accustomed to sing to the sun, moon, stars, and all the heavenly hosts.

The first Christians, from their local situation, as well as from other circumstances, must have been uncultivated imitators of Grecian music. But the more important inquiries are, whether the music they selected, was such as *they themselves considered skilful*; and whether *they actually derived from it, such effects as the nature of the institution requires*. And here, the testimony of *the fathers* is directly in point.

An extract from the "Admonitio ad gentes," of Clemens Alexandrinus, which was published in the second number of this review on the subject of the choir, is the first authority in point which meets us, and to this the reader is referred to avoid repetition.

The following passage from Philo relates to the singing in the nocturnal assemblies that were held in those early periods of the Christian Church. "After supper, their songs began; when all were arisen, *they selected from the rest, one of men, and one of women, in order to celebrate some festival; and, from each of these, a person of majestic form, and well skilled in music, was chosen to lead the band*. They then chanted hymns in honour of God, *composed in different measures, and modulations, now singing together, and now answering each other by turns*."

More than three centuries had elapsed before Christians could be permitted to enjoy the rites of public devotion; and in all this time, the progress of church music must have been inconsiderable. But from the following passage from Eusebius, we may infer that the institution continued to be regarded with interest. Speaking of the consecration of the first churches, he observes, that "There was one common consent, in chanting forth the praises of God; the performance of the service was exact;

the rites of the church were solemn and majestic; and there was a place appointed, for those who sing the psalms; youths and virgins, old men and women."

St. Augustine, who lived in the latter part of the fourth century, has left us the following testimony of his own feelings in relation to the singing of psalms and hymns at Milan, just after his conversion.

"The voices flowed in at my ears; truth was distilled in my heart, and the affection of *piety overflowed in sweet tears of joy*;" and he speaks of the exercise, in a more general manner, as being a way of "mutual consolation and exhortation, with a *joint harmony of voices and hearts*;" and he mentions a time when the churches "had begun to practice this way."

Some of the ancient fathers have also told us, that their music frequently drew Gentiles into the church through curiosity; and that they were so well pleased as afterwards to continue with them, from better and holier motives. To this may be added as corroborative testimony of a heathen, that of Lucian, who speaks of what he is pleased to denominate "the *psalm-singing rage* of the first Christians."

But it is needless to multiply extracts, or to deduce inferences from these which are sufficiently obvious. However simple the music of the first Christians may have been in comparison with that of later times, it was such as they themselves considered skilful, and which, in that day, was generally felt to be effective. And since they speak of choirs, and selections of singers, and of leaders; and since they testify to the existence of decency, order, exactness, earnestness, piety and feeling, they certainly furnish us with a precedent of no ordinary interest; and since it corresponds with the history of Jewish music, the arguments to be derived from it, in favour of extensive and unceasing cultivation, are not easily controverted.

If the ancient Jews made a serious and important business of cultivation; so also, according to their opportunities, did the early Christians. If the former had choirs or bands of singers

for the service, so also had the latter, at least, on some occasions. The ancient saints and the early Christians, had the same views of the institution; and both were evidently governed by the same leading principles.

But how does this statement compare with what may be said in relation to the present times? doubtless it will be sooner or later acknowledged that there have been times of deep and long-continued declension. Yet the Christian community seem to have no suspicion of the fact; and they have slumbered so long, and so profoundly upon this subject, that their notions respecting it, have scarcely more consistency or importance than the dreams of midnight. But let us admit, for the sake of argument, that the picture should have been drawn in fairer colours—let us admit that our performers, at the present day, may generally claim for themselves, the attributes of exactness, skill and earnestness; it certainly does not follow, that they may claim that of effectiveness, themselves being judges. They universally complain of ignorance, inattention and dulness in others; although they seem not to suspect the real causes of such a state of things, they labour to improve by cultivation; but others are scarcely enough interested to acknowledge the necessity of improvement, or to recognise its existence, even when extensively cultivated. The truth is, that Christians have long since, left the process of cultivation chiefly to unhallowed hands; and, in so doing, they have virtually abandoned some of the most sacred interests of the institution.

The remaining details of musical history will assist us in more fully developing the causes of the existing declension, as well as, in placing its *reality* in a more striking point of light. But this we must defer to our next.—*Troy Review.*

TO FEMALES.

Extract of a letter from a teacher in the N. sabbath school, to a friend engaged in the same employment in F. dated January 10th, 1826.

To your inquiries about our school, I can only say that the interest among

the teachers and scholars seems unabated. The affection existing between them is increasing, and I hope all feel more and more that the cause of sabbath schools is one of love, of enlarged benevolence, and of glorious tendency. We can indeed but partially estimate the importance of these institutions, for their influence extends into eternity; and happy are they who have enlisted with energy, with faith, with prayer, in this work, for God shall crown their efforts with success. We have often you know, expressed our conviction, that this is the sphere where females may be eminently useful, and I am more than ever confirmed in the opinion; having witnessed the happy effects of their exertions in one or two instances, during my tour last summer. I spent but one sabbath at E. but was favoured with an introduction to a lady, who *feels* and who *acts* for the salvation of the rising generation: she removed thither from Massachusetts a few months before, but found nothing doing for the instruction of the children; the sacred hours of the sabbath, were spent by them in trifling and in sin: her "spirit was stirred within her," she felt that something must be done, and resolved to commence without delay a sabbath school. The proposal was novel and met the opposition of multitudes; but her zeal was undaunted, she opened this school, and a few attended; when I was there the number had increased to more than two hundred. A few of the gayest youth of the place had become assistant teachers: these of course felt their work done after an hour or so on the sabbath, spent in hearing recitations, but the burden of souls lay with weight upon Mrs. F. through the week, and drove her often to a throne of grace, for the salvation of the dear children: she expressed to me her regret that no one could be found to unite with her for social prayer; but I felt that a spirit like her's, need not fear, it would prevail though it plead singly and alone.

At M. I found another lady as deeply interested in the cause; indeed her whole soul appeared engrossed with its importance and utili-

ty: I had heard previous to seeing her, that she had been made the instrument of much good, and was thus prepared to prize her acquaintance, hoping to catch something of her spirit. In one of the interviews enjoyed with her, she gave a relation which interested me exceedingly, and which goes far to establish our loved maxim, "females can do much for the extension of Christ's kingdom." She spent a year in the neighbourhood of B. Though at that place religious privileges are many, in the region back, the scattered population is extremely ignorant, and almost entirely destitute of mental or moral culture. To her feeling heart an avenue was opened, and the effect was the immediate commencement of a sabbath school. The number of children increased weekly, their attention was enlisted, and their proficiency great: they carried a savor of what Miss N. taught them to their homes, and the parents became interested; several of the women expressed a wish to attend with their children, consent was given and they came.

The building in which the school was kept was old; for some weeks the men brought their families several miles by water, in canoes, and after the women and children were admitted within doors, took their stations on the outside, and listened through the cracks to hear the instruction given. After a short time, they also earnestly requested permission to enter, that they might hear more comfortably. Miss N. was alone, she had no one to assist her, and feeling her own weakness, for a moment shrunk from the task of attempting to teach those older than herself; but, after asking direction of heaven, difficulties were removed, and the next sabbath she saw herself surrounded by 40 or 50 men, women, and children, all eager for instruction. She trembled at the responsibility of her situation, but God stood by her, to assist by his Spirit, to comfort by his grace, and to set home by his power on the heart, the truths she uttered: her labours of love were not in vain; I do not recollect the precise number of hope-

ful conversions, but several as she had reason to believe, were made subjects of renewing grace, and will doubtless in a brighter world, hail her as the instrument under God, of rescuing them from ignorance and sin.

Her efforts are not yet ended, she is doing as much at N. as in the region of her former labours. The people among whom she now is, are many of them poor and wicked; but by her perseverance and condescension she is acquiring an almost unbounded influence over them, which promises to be salutary in the extreme. I spent one sabbath in her school, and enjoyed it highly. As there is no preaching in the neighbourhood, except every third week, she commences her school at nine o'clock in the morning, and continues it through the day with only two hours intermission at noon. You may fancy that it would become tedious so long continued, but I can assure you it is far from it: there was perfect stillness, and fixed attention till the close, from all assembled, and there were present old men and matrons, young men and maidens. In the morning she hears the recitations of the children, explains their lessons, and converses with them familiarly on the importance of immediate repentance: in the afternoon a portion of scripture is read, and a tract calculated to interest the older, as well as younger hearers; these, with singing and prayers, make up the services of the day. At noon she visits the families, encourages the parents and children, furnishes the destitute with clothes, and enters upon her work in the afternoon with untiring zeal. When I was there, she had succeeded in bringing into the school, the children of one man who was notorious for his wickedness. He had even been so vile as to take his children upon his knee as soon as they could talk, and learn them to swear by rule, and fight with each other! but he received her visits kindly, acknowledged it must be benevolence alone which led her to take such an interest in his family, and promised their punctual attendance on her instructions. Before I left M.

two or three of her scholars were indulging a hope, and others anxious for the salvation of their souls.

And now dear E. after this long story all the comment I would make, is one which your own heart will dictate, let us "go and do likewise."

LOUISIANA.

Extract of a letter from a lady, dated New Orleans, March, 1826, to the Corresponding Secretary.

After reading your letter, I immediately sent it to some gentlemen most actively engaged in our sunday school: they were gratified and pleased at your proposition, and had the day previous declared themselves auxiliary to your society. They intend to publish some extracts from your letter, to try and keep up the excitement on the subject of sunday schools that has recently appeared here, and manifested itself by the formation, or rather reorganization of a sunday school society last sabbath, when the above resolution was adopted. In the winter of 22 and 23, we had here a very flourishing school, consisting of upwards of a hundred scholars; but, since that time, it has wanted for proper attention, and has dwindled away. I am in hopes it will revive again, the present efforts may do something for it. I will endeavour to distribute in the most beneficial way, those pamphlets you sent me; and if at any time, any talent I have, can be made subservient or efficient, to advance the interest of sunday schools or any good work, I hope no apology on your part, will be thought necessary to command it.

IMPROVEMENT OF SABBATH SCHOOLS.

The following sketch of the sabbath school in Gorham, Maine, drawn up by the Rev. T. Pomeroy, will be read with interest by all sabbath school teachers, who are anxious for the improvement of their schools.

In Nov. 1822, at the close of the school for the season, when the children were expecting to receive, as was usual, a premium of books, a proposition was made to them, in

number about one hundred, to give up their premiums for the foundation of a library, to which all the children of the sabbath school might have access gratuitously, once a month. The proposition was fully explained to them, and the probable advantages of such a library over a little annual premium, and those in favour of the proposition were called upon to rise. Every one rose with an expression of countenance which seemed to say, I rejoice at this movement.

A sabbath school society, of males and females, with a small annual tax upon each, was immediately formed for the support of the library, and for the management of the school. The library is denominated, The Sabbath School and Juvenile Library of Gorham, and is the property of the society. All who attend the sabbath school constantly during the summer, and conduct with propriety, have the gratuitous use of this library for the year, and this is all the premium they have. Those who are absent without a proper excuse, or conduct improperly, are debarred the privilege of the library, and this is the only punishment that is inflicted.

Any youth who does *not* attend the sabbath school, may have access to the library by paying in advance 12½ cents annually; and the members of the society take books with no other expense than their annual tax, which even parsimony itself can hardly make any one unwilling to pay. The library now contains a little over 500 bound volumes. The regular exchange price of one work in it was \$60. It contains, besides, all that variety of books, which is adapted to the various classes and ages of those who have access to it, and which is consistent with the entire exclusion of novels and plays, and all works of an erroneous and immoral tendency.

This library has been raised by the spirited and united exertions of the sabbath school society, by an annual contribution at the close of the sabbath school, by some donations in money, and by books given by people out of town, who deserve and have the thanks of the society. And here let me suggest—as libraries of this description are peculiarly useful

in country places like this, and as incipient measures are in operation to establish them in many places, that gentlemen, who have useful books, lying useless in their private libraries, would set them all to work in a good cause by presenting them to some of these rising and useful sabbath school and juvenile libraries. The same hint may perhaps be given without offence to all who are publishing new books. Should they, after the edition is complete, strike off a few extra numbers, which will be but little expense to them, and forward one to each of a number of these country libraries, they would, at the same time, and by the same act, do much good and submit the merits of the work to a wider inspection, and probably procure the sale of some for private libraries.

Should any feel disposed thus to assist the Sabbath School and Juvenile library in this place, the first of the kind we have known, they can do it by forwarding their favours to the book store of Mr. William Hyde, Portland, directed to the Sabbath School and Juvenile Library of Gorham, Maine. Any such favour will be gratefully received and long remembered.

Let me also ask, whether those who are in the habit of giving away tracts, either single, or in volumes, would not better answer their own good designs by giving them to these libraries? Pardoning this, not unpleasant, and I hope not unprofitable digression, you will permit me to say that the library in this place is under the care of directors, and the sabbath school under the care of managers, chosen by the society at each annual meeting, and no distinctions are designedly made in the society, library, or school, on account of name or denomination.

The life-giving and preserving principle of the sabbath school is the library; and so far as I know, it has far more than answered the most sanguine expectations of its founders and supporters. After more than three years experiment, I can safely say—for at present I am the librarian,—that the ardour of children for books is not in the least abated. Li-

brary day is with the most of them as pleasant as ever.

Nor is it a little amusing to see what advances some comparatively little children have made, in the knowledge of books, and in the art of selecting and obtaining those of their own choice: and how much all, who have been taught the first principles of mental enterprise, dread the thought of forfeiting the privileges of the library.

The library and the school have mutually and reciprocally a happy effect on each other. The instruction of the school prepares the mind to read the books in the library, and one special duty of the teachers, who have access to the library, is to teach the children how to read with profit, and tell them what books are suitable for them: and reading the library prepares the mind to act with more energy in the school. Hence, there is a mutual action and reaction between them.

The teachers are appointed and procured and instructed in their duty by the managers. The children and youth that attend, are divided into classes according to the studies which they pursue. The members of the Bible class, who pursue their studies with me during the winter, attach themselves to the sabbath school, when it begins, and form one class there. Another class has studied the History of Christ, recently published; another, Watts' Scriptural History; another, Union Catechism; another, the Evangelical Primer; another, the Assembly's Catechism; another, Lincoln and Edmands' Questions; another, Cummings' Questions; and the lesser children have committed to memory scriptures and hymns. These are divided as necessity requires, and each division is put under its own teacher. Each teacher is required to keep account of tardiness and absence, and is empowered to excuse or not, according to his own judgment. By this bill, laid before the managers at the close of the school, they determine who is to be debarred from the privileges of the library and who not.

No tickets are used; no account is kept of the studies of the scholars;

no exertion is made to have them commit a great deal to memory; and the immense labour and perplexity of a superintendent, on the old plan, are saved. The lessons are given out, the studies are directed, and the recitations heard, on the same principles, and in the same way as in our academies. Short lessons, well studied, and, in recitations, fully explained and enforced by the teachers, are the principle and practice at which we aim. It is made the duty of each teacher to spend with his class the hour which is allotted, and to use every exertion to improve not only the memory, but also the taste, manners, judgment, and heart of his pupils. For this purpose they are to ask, not only the regular questions of the lessons, but others, that may rise out of them, and explain and apply them according to their own judgment.

At the close of the school, each teacher examines his class, in the presence of the managers and all who please to attend, in the studies which have occupied their attention. These examinations have afforded very convincing proof, not only of the diligence, faithfulness, and improvement of the scholars, but of the advantage of this method over the one commonly pursued.

On the last sabbath of the school, a report of its proceedings and progress, without any invidious distinctions or comparisons to excite pride in some and malice in others, is publicly read; a sermon, designed to be appropriate, is preached; and a collection taken for the benefit of the library. This plan of operation has been in use for three years, and no one acquainted with the result would be willing to change its essential features. Experience has taught us that, although we cannot tell of the thousands of verses committed and questions answered, nor tell of any prodigies in memory, our children are none the less interested, and, as we believe, benefited by the exercises of the sabbath school. Their examination is far more satisfactory to us than the long account and sum total of the ingredients and quantities that have found a partial and mo-

mentary lodgment in the memory: nor can we possibly believe in the utility of those exercises which merely improve, or rather overload and break down the memory. Is it not at least questionable, whether children do not overrate their own attainments, and very many if not most men give them too much credit, from the statements which are made and blazoned from the press, of what they have repeated, in too many instances, with the help of an interested and *laborious* prompter, from the Bible and other books.

But as sabbath school reports have become so common, and exhibit so much sameness, all that a vast majority of your readers will know of this account, will be, what they learn from the caption. Should any of them, interested in sabbath schools, cast his eye over this hasty sketch, and be excited to make any improvement upon the sabbath school system, he will confer on us and the public a special favour, and to him will we say that we do not feel that our plan is by any means perfect. To him too might we apologise for any seeming severity upon the old and yet too common system of operations in sabbath schools.

Our plan, we think, saves more than half the perplexity and labour of conducting a school in the other way, and this is no small consideration to him who rightly interprets,—*In it thou shalt not do any work.* Besides, the expense of tickets, class papers, and premiums, and the count-books of superintendents, is entirely saved. This saving has done much to support our library.

From this statement it will be seen that any child, youth, or older person, in this town, can have access to as many books as he can read, and on terms to which he cannot object. For simply 12½ cents, which may at the annual meeting on the third Monday of April next be advanced to 20 or 25 cents, any one may read, if he can do it one year, 500 volumes of useful books; and this sum any one, however poor, might easily save by a retrenchment of needless expenses. It costs our youth the same sum to take a single volume from a

circulating library in town, only for two weeks. This library has more than doubled the reading in this town; but there are still many who feel no interest in the thing, and who are worse than wasting the golden hours of life. How shall they be influenced to avail themselves of privileges which are almost without money and without price?

PHILIPSBURGH, PA.

The school commenced June 12th 1825, with 35 scholars; with few teachers and but slender funds. In the course of a few sabbaths, a very general and favourable interest was excited in the breasts of both parents and children. Liberal contributions were made to its funds, and in about nine months from the time of its formation, it numbers 20 teachers, and more than 100 scholars. It has already exerted a powerful reforming influence upon the youth connected with it, and its prospects for the future are highly promising and delightful.

In our plan of instruction and government, there is nothing peculiar; we have adopted that in general use: special attention however has been paid to the moral and religious instruction of the scholars. They are regularly addressed in the presence of their parents at the Monthly Prayer Meeting, in addition to the customary address in the school room on the sabbath.

The sphere of its influence, is, almost exclusively, the village in which it is located. The nearest neighbouring schools, are those organized by the Rev. Mr. Alden, in the adjoining county of Clearfield. The establishment of new schools, in the more dense settlements of this thinly populated part of Pennsylvania, is loudly called for by their ignorance and irreligion. Destitute, as they very generally are, of ministerial labours, the information and excitement which they need, might be communicated by the circulation among them of tracts or pamphlets, detailing the objects of sunday schools, the proper mode of conducting them, their importance, &c. If such are in the pos-

session of your Board, and if they think themselves warranted, in their gratuitous distribution in settlements situated as above, I cheerfully offer myself as an agent for the purpose.

IRISH SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

This society was founded in the year 1809. At that time there existed only *seventy* sunday schools in all Ireland; and these schools were probably conducted with little of order or system. During the first year of its establishment, the society assisted but *two* schools. There are, however, now in connexion with it, 1702 sunday schools, which are reported to contain 12,837 gratuitous teachers, and 150,831 scholars.

The object of this society is to promote the establishment and facilitate the conducting of sunday schools in Ireland, by disseminating the most approved plans for the management of such schools, by supplying them with spelling books, and copies of the sacred scriptures, or extracts, without note or comment, either gratuitously or at reduced prices.

It does not assume to itself any control over the internal regulations of the schools in connexion with it, nor use any other interference in their concerns, than that of kind admonition and advice.

It does not disseminate amongst the schools any book relating to religious instruction except the scriptures, without note or comment, or extracts therefrom.

The number of schools connected with this society has rapidly increased from its commencement, so that in the last report there were in the provinces of

	Sch.	Schrs.	Tea.
Ulster,	1222	118,271	9,492
Leinster,	296	20,823	2,146
Connaught,	91	5,056	492
Munster,	93	6,681	707
	1702	150,831	12,087

The issue of books from the Depository gratuitously, and at reduced prices, since the establishment of the society, has amounted to 10,624 Bibles—155,271 Testaments—425,190

Spelling Books—1,698 books of Hints for Conducting Sunday Schools.

The practical benefits which have resulted from the sunday school system of instruction, have been of a most beneficial nature, in numerous instances.—“The sabbath is no longer wasted or profaned as the day for idle sports and petty depredations, but becomingly appropriated to its intended object, the acquisition of religious knowledge, and the enjoyment of devotional feeling—children trained up in the principles of christianity—parents benefited by the lessons and example of their offspring—the general habits and manners of the poor improved—domestic comforts promoted—the labours of parochial and other ministers facilitated—an increased attendance of both parents and children at public worship—the holy scriptures introduced and valued in families where hitherto they were unknown—a bond of connexion established between the different ranks of society—the rich made acquainted with the wants and actual circumstances of their poorer neighbours, and induced to adopt other means for their relief and comfort.”

ACCOUNT OF A SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHOLAR.

To a minister of religion, who would ever keep in view the responsibility of that office, which he believes the Holy Ghost has moved him to take upon himself, what can be more grateful to the mind, or more animating to the feelings than a belief, justified by experience and facts, that he has, in any wise, been made instrumental in *preparing and making ready the way of the Lord, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just?* What greater token of the love and approbation of Him, who said unto him, “Go ye also into my vineyard,” can he possess, than a conviction that there is “a shaking among the dry bones,” which indeed were “very dry,” until he “prophesied upon them, and said unto them, O ye dry bones, hear ye the word of the Lord,”—that the divine breath has indeed entered into their souls, that they might live before Him. And

more especially, when this conviction is entertained not with respect to individuals only, but the present state of a whole parish will afford some reasonable ground of hope, that from the four winds, in answer to prayer, “breath hath come into the people, and they live and stand upon their feet.”

There is, however, reason to fear that the ministers of religion might indulge in such thoughts as these, as expressive of the desires of their hearts, rather than as facts borne out by their experience. Nevertheless, as an individual, situated in a country parish, not very remote from a large commercial city, where the sound of the gospel has for many years been heard, and, it is to be hoped, appreciated, I must bear my testimony to the fact, that, however faithfully the truth as it is in Jesus may be preached in surrounding parishes, there may still be found a central spot, destitute of the light, yea, immersed in the grossest darkness: where, until the ambassador of Christ shall “join himself to the chariot,” and entering into the cottage, proclaim Jesus, who “was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, opened not his mouth,” parents and children, masters and servants, will pass through the vale of death “without hope,” because they had lived “without Christ in the world.” It has been my happy experience to behold, in a parish, of which I could, at one period, entertain no other feeling than that of dire despair, a change, “a shaking amongst the dry bones,” after seven years exertions amongst my people: which circumstance powerfully enforces upon my mind, as it should upon the minds of my brethren in the ministry, the Apostolic exhortation, “Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour will not be in vain in the Lord.” My object in this paper will not be so much to describe the general state of my parish, as to point out the contrast between two of my younger parishioners, who died at different periods of my ministry, children of the same parents; together with the alteration which has been produced in the pa-

rents themselves, by the preaching of the everlasting gospel, subsequently to the decease of the first child, whose remains I conducted to the tomb, February 6th, 1822.

I had been spending a few days in the neighbouring city of B——; and, on my return to the Rectory, was informed by the servants, that J—— M—— had been taken suddenly ill during the week, and was then no more. The youth was, indeed, gone beyond the reach of the ministerial exhortation; but the recollections of his general character and conduct led me into the most painful train of thought, respecting what must inevitably have been the state of his soul, at that moment, without “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;” for the exercises of which graces, the space of time which intervened between the first attack of disease and the approach of death, appeared to be very circumscribed. All I could do, then, was to sigh over the recollections I had of poor Jack; and to lament my absence from home, at that particular moment, when, perhaps his mind might have been affected by a faithful exposure to him of his real character and danger, and of the doom which awaits those who die without an interest in Christ, and a hope in the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel. It is impossible for me to say how many times the dishonest dealings of the youth, which were known to exist up to the week in which he died, his depredations upon my own property, as well as that of other neighbours, under the sanction of the parental smile of approbation, and his almost universal breach of the sabbath, have, since his departure, painfully recurred to my mind.

On receiving information of his removal hence, I hastened to the cottage in which he lived. It stood upon an eminence, by the road side leading to the Rectory, and was, at all times, regarded by me as a nuisance, from its contiguity to my glebe and potatoe ground, out of which the swine, having but little provision at home, continued to satisfy their craving appetites; as did the children, from the apple-trees which grew in my or-

chard. But this was not the only circumstance which made me to regard the cottage in the light of a nuisance. The unusually narrow road was at all times crowded with donkeys, the use of which was, alas! too evident; and the exterior filth was only an indication of the desultory habits of its tenants, and of that still greater pollution which existed within their hearts, and which the regenerating grace of Christ could alone cleanse and purify.

There were some flags, placed in the form of a flight of steps, leading to the cottage, by which I found it difficult, not to say perilous, to ascend. On entering the habitation of this poverty-stricken family, my eye was instantly caught by the coffin, wherein were deposited the remains of the youth; and which were laid out by the side of a large fire, near which was seated the father of the family, with his hat on, his pipe in his hand, and his mind evidently not much affected by the change which had taken place with respect to his child. The mother was engaged in nursing; and to complete the picture, one corner of the room was occupied by a litter of young pigs.

I instantly directed my attention, and laboured to rivet the attention of the family, on the loss they had sustained—on the uncertainty of human life—on the danger of our dying in an unprepared state—on the lesson which such a spectacle as this was calculated to teach us; and finally, on the salutary effects, which I trusted would be produced upon their lives, walk, and conversation, by this most solemn warning. Having, in particular, dwelt upon the sin of sabbath-breaking, and exhorted them to attend the house of God, I prayed with and for them, and departed, uttering, as I retraced my steps to the Rectory, *Alas, poor Jack! alas, poor Jack!* For a few sabbaths after the interment of this youth, I observed that the parents attended the church regularly; but subsequently they declined into a total neglect of the means of grace. Meanwhile one of their children was in the habit of attending pretty regularly at the Sunday school, which is held at the Rectory. The time at length arrived, when the owner of the

property, on which the house occupied by this family stood, was desirous, from its dilapidated state, and from some other circumstances, of pulling it down to the ground; and its inhabitants were compelled to seek an asylum in a habitation which formed one of a range of buildings, appropriated, at the expense of the parish, to the accommodation of the poor. Here their habits were, from necessity, very different to what they were, when living in a solitary house, and having, as it were, the whole of the country at their command, without being exposed to the intrusion of a single eye, or dreading detection in any of their schemes, which would not bear parochial inspection. However, whether from the improved state of their child, who was in the Sunday school, or from the preaching of the gospel, or from the pangs of an accusing conscience, rendered still more severe by the recollection of poor Jack, and his nefarious life, is not for me to determine; but true it is, that from some cause this ungodly couple became different in their outward conduct, regular in their attendance at church, and desirous of imparting to their children the most valuable of all knowledge—scripture knowledge. The best of books is now frequently seen in the father's hands—his temper has become improved—he is surrounded by his little family on the Lord's day, which he catechizes and instructs; and he extends, I trust, the hand of faith to receive the memorials of a Saviour's dying love, whenever an opportunity presents itself. The recent decease of the second child (who was regarded by the wife of the clergyman as her *peculiar charge*, and whose mind became, in a particular manner, drawn towards her, from the circumstances of her brother's death, as well as from those higher motives, which should actuate every Christian instructor in our Sunday schools,) led me to the selection of those words contained in Luke x. 21, as a fit subject for a funeral discourse, after her spirit had joined the spirits of those dear Sunday school children, who are standing round the throne, singing that song of "worthy the Lamb," a song

which they first learnt, perhaps, within the walls of a Sunday school. While addressing my auditory, I found myself entirely disposed to exchange my lamentation of *alas, poor Jack!* into "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Having conducted the reader thus far, I shall complete the contrast between the two children, as nearly as possible, in the language of my discourse, on the day that her remains were conducted to "the house appointed for all living." The honoured name of Raikes shall be had in everlasting remembrance. Thus I am conducted to that circumstance, which under God, should endear that name to me, in connexion with that dear child, who has been removed from a poor-house, to reside in a mansion of bliss, prepared for her by Him who said, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go before to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also." She was a Sunday school girl. I wish it, however, to be fully understood, that I am not going to hold her up as a bright example of early piety, or to present either to friends or relatives a flattering picture of the deceased; nor because she happened to be in our Sunday school (for the support of which I may be expected to be anxious) shall I insist more strongly on the benefits she derived from it, than matter of fact will bear me out in doing. The fact itself is cause for gratitude, that there should be a young child, of eleven years of age, living in the fear of God, in a neighbourhood where, I am grieved to say, there has been, in time past, and I greatly fear there now is, much profaneness, much Sabbath-breaking, much disobedience to parents, and frequent depredations are committed upon the property of surrounding neighbours: and, when we consider how difficult a matter it is to draw the attention of age and experience to the things which make for our everlasting peace; when we consider how many chapters in the

Bible may be read; how many sermons heard; how many sabbaths spent; and, I would add, how many ministerial remonstrances offered to some persons, without any visible effect being produced upon their hearts, I do say, that it is satisfactory to any minister to learn, upon unquestionable evidence, that a child so young, and who, before her connexion with the Sunday school, in this parish, was a sabbath-breaker, and profane as well as others, subsequently became penitent, humble, prayerful—a partaker of the grace of God, trusting only to the merits of Christ for salvation, while she was earnestly desirous of displaying that holiness, which can alone evince our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Upon one occasion, when I visited her on her dying bed (the fervor and devotion of the child is still fresh in my recollection,) she emphatically repeated after me those words of our confession, *“we have erred and strayed from thy ways, like lost sheep; we have left undone those things which we ought to have done; we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us; but do thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders: spare thou them, O God, which confess their faults.”* In B— M— there was a remarkable tenderness of conscience, which was not unfrequently called forth, and which proves to me, that the Spirit of God, had, for a long time before her death, been striving with her, and I had the satisfaction of hearing her confirm this opinion with her own lips, at one of my interviews with her, about a fortnight before her departure. A neighbour, who found her employed upon one occasion, about what was highly improper, accosted her thus: “Betsy, don’t you know that wicked children will burn in fire and brimstone for ever and ever?” The effect of this reproof was, that her heart was oppressed with anguish, and vented its agony in tears. At her Sunday school, when a friend was instructing her, she would frequently manifest signs of the most exquisite feeling, and especially when repeating the commandment, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” “Remember

the sabbath-day, to keep it holy.” “Honour thy father and thy mother;” and, “Thou shalt not steal.” The last named commandment caused her to change countenance, and, from the excess of her feeling, she was obliged to retire from the room, before she could recover from the agitation which was produced by the questions proposed to her; and even a short time before her decease, while her father was engaged in catechising his children, in the room beneath that where she lay, she was heard to repeat, in a loud and fervent whisper, the answer to the questions in the Church Catechism.

Her attendance at school was even more regular, and her desires to be in her class more earnest, than might have been expected from a child, whom death had marked out for its spoil. She was fond of reading, and frequently, on her return home from church on the Lord’s day, sought an early opportunity to find out the text, and carry it into some neighbours, whose eyesight she thought was too dim to admit of their readily finding it out. Here I am reminded of a trait in her character, which, together with others already mentioned, I would were visible in every child, who is privileged to receive instruction in a Sunday school. If, at any time, she saw a certain neighbour (whose kindness to her was marked, and continued until the day of her death, notwithstanding she has begun to bend beneath the weight of years) carrying her pitcher to the brook for water, she was accustomed to come up to her, and say, ‘give me the pitcher, give me the pitcher! I am younger than you, and I will fetch some water for you;’ and, sometimes, she made a point of going beforehand, to inquire if this person was in want of any water? As it regards her attendance at church, it was willing, regular, and punctual. She was ever apprehensive that she should not be there in time. In the absence of her mother, I have, myself, had frequent opportunities of witnessing her fill with fidelity, the office of nurse to her younger brothers, and I have derived authentic information respecting the care she took of her parents’ property, in their

absence, and also of her self-denial with regard to the food left in her custody.

She discovered a sense of gratitude both to God and man. Being asked by a neighbour, during her last illness, from whence some little comforts came, which were sent her from the Rectory, she replied, 'they are gifts from God, have I not heard you say so, Nanny, when good things have been given to you? God bless all my friends; for I have plenty of friends, have I not?' At another time, she took up some money which a little girl had sent her, and putting it to her mouth, kissed it, and prayed for a blessing on the donor! It became a painful part of my ministerial duty with respect to her, to speak of death, which to all appearance, was not very remote, as her countenance showed some tokens, by which the approach of the king of terrors might be anticipated. I asked her whether she would rather die or live? She replied, 'I prefer to die; because if I live, I shall have more sins to answer for; I should like to die, and go to my Saviour.' The idea which she formed of heaven was, that there is no sin there, and she thought that she should be happy in heaven, because she could not bear sin. The neighbour, who has more than once been alluded to, entered into close conversation with her, one day, on the subject of her afflictions, and the object of the sufferings she was called to endure. The answer was, 'that they were laid upon her because she was a sinner,' and when reminded that her sufferings were a means employed to prepare her for heaven, she added, 'I don't suffer as our Saviour did.' The sufferings of the Redeemer were then detailed, at some length; when her young lips pronounced, and her heart too felt a sentiment, worthy of being recorded; 'It was hard that the Son of God should so suffer for a poor girl.' It was rejoined, you must endeavour to follow his example in bearing your sufferings. 'I do,' said she, 'Nanny, I do;' and, in her acutest pain there was, it appears, a strenuous effort made by her to "endure all things." The books which were sent her from the Sunday school,

were perused by her with avidity; and when exhausted by the effort of reading them, she felt unwilling to part with them, and would therefore conceal them in her bed, until she had acquired strength enough to proceed with the reading of them. A short period before her dissolution, she assigned a reason for recalling the assertion which she had made in a former part of her illness, namely, that she wished to die and go to her Saviour. 'I should like,' said she, 'to live twelve months longer, that I might attend my school regularly, and get tickets enough to purchase a Bible for my sister.' The most valuable part of her property, her Testament, she formerly bequeathed to her father the day before her death. I pray God it may become a blessing to his soul, that both he and the family at large may *read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, that by patience and comfort of God's holy word, left as a legacy to them, by a dying child and sister, they may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life*, which we trust she had derived from reading that very volume, and which hope, she explicitly declared to her minister in the language of the collect, *Thou O Lord hast given us through thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord*. Like every one who sincerely desires the salvation of his own soul, she felt an anxiety for the souls of others, and among the rest for her brother, who died four years ago, when she must have been about seven years of age. 'Poor Jack!' said she, 'poor Jack! I hope I shall meet poor Jack in heaven!' The lamentation was natural; but whether the expressed hope has been realized, the day of judgment must determine.

We are now brought to the closing scene of her sufferings, when the Saviour's voice, having as it were, pronounced before the throne of the Most High with respect to her, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," her happy spirit winged its flight into the presence of that Saviour, whom she loved, and took possession of the mansion which He had prepared for her.

She requested to be turned on her left side, and supporting her head with her hand, said, 'I shall be easy

now; her mother supposing she had dropped off to sleep, was careful not to disturb her; but on subsequently inclining towards her face, found that she had sweetly fallen asleep in Jesus, without a struggle or a groan.

Thus died, in the faith of Christ, B—— M——, who might be considered as the first fruits of our parochial Sunday school. May this account prove encouraging to those, who are engaged as teachers in similar institutions, while it pleads powerfully in behalf of those parishes which are not hitherto blessed with such efficient means of promoting the temporal, but above all, the spiritual welfare of families, who are "sitting in darkness and the shadow of death."

ORIGIN OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

(Continued from page 104.)

In October 1788, it was suggested to the Sunday School Society, that it would be desirable to extend its aid to Wales, but the subject was adjourned, on account of the state of the finances. July 11, 1798, an additional subscription was commenced for the benefit of Sunday schools in Wales; and on the 9th of January, 1800, both the funds were united together. So great was the progress of Sunday schools in Wales, that in three years 177 schools were established, containing 8,040 children. In July, 1799, the committee informed the society of their intention "if possible, to print an edition of the New Testament, in the Welch language, a measure which they had much at heart, being convinced of its great propriety and necessity; that the knowledge which had been acquired in Sunday schools might be directed to the Scriptures, which are of infinite importance to the bodies and souls of men." We have heard that this want of the Scriptures, occasioned by Sunday schools, led to the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society; and our country has surely the greatest reason for gratitude, that when her poor were taught to read and to appreciate the word of God, by Sunday schools, a society was formed which puts the Bible into the hands of our well-educated youth. The following

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extract from the report of the committee, delivered the 10th of October, 1804, is to this point:

"While the committee rejoice in the testimonies which they have received of the *particular* good consequences resulting from their labours, they cannot but advert with more than ordinary satisfaction, to that *general* impression which the society, under the blessing of God, has made upon the minds of the lower orders of the community. It has been recently proved that the Scriptures are sought for with uncommon avidity in many parts of the island; and it is worthy of remark, that the very evidence which proves that a desire to peruse the scriptures has been excited, affords an equal proof that the honour of having excited it belongs in the greatest degree to the institution and encouragement of Sunday schools."

The exertions of the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, were eminently successful, in establishing Sunday schools in Wales; they were commenced about 1789, and have proved extensively useful.

Sunday schools have continued to prosper in Wales, to the present time, and have taught great numbers both of the young and the adult poor to read and to value the sacred scriptures.

In the report of the Stockport Sunday school for 1797, it is remarked, "that several who were taken into the school, ignorant of letters, are now making the most grateful return by becoming diligent teachers therein; others grown to years of maturity, are comfortably settled in life, and become useful members of society, whilst some who had been cut off in the bloom of youth, had died in full prospect of a glorious immortality, with their latest breath praying for their benefactors."

In the history of Sunday schools not only has the providence of God appeared in raising up gratuitous teachers, but also in rendering these institutions the means of self-perpetuation. And we may state from experience and observation, that some of the most effective teachers have thus been raised from the ranks, who have been thoroughly initiated in the sys-

tem of instruction, and devotedly attached to their work, from a sense of gratitude, as well as duty. May the number of such individuals be increased a thousand fold!

In Scotland, which has long been distinguished by its attention to education, it was at first thought that sunday schools were not needed, and consequently very few were established till about the year 1797. It should be observed, that the sabbath schools in Scotland, are generally held only in the evening, from 6 to 8 o'clock, and that the communication of religious instruction is their sole object, as the children have been taught to read the scriptures, before they are admitted.

The Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society opened its first school in March, 1797. The Aberdeen Sabbath Evening School Society was established the same year, and, soon after, similar societies and schools were established in most of the populous places in Scotland.

The next remarkable era in the history of sunday schools, is the establishment of the Sunday School Union, in 1803.

In reviewing the state of religion we are struck with pleasing surprise at beholding its rapid progress during the few years which have elapsed since the commencement of the nineteenth century. In our opinion, nothing has contributed more to produce this pleasing effect than that unity and love by which the children of God have been so generally influenced. Formerly, the spirit of Christianity seems to have been almost lost in the collision of parties, and the animosities of jarring sects; and thus while religion at home was drooping, very few efforts were made to diffuse its blessings abroad. But when the public mind became enlightened and sanctified by pious instruction, and the circulation of the scriptures, bigotry, hatred, and discord withdrew, like spectres, compelled to retreat at the approach of day light, and they now only haunt the imaginations of the timid, the unenlightened, or the superstitious. The society of which we are about to give some account, bears the name of *union* in its ti-

tle, and a union it is for a most important purpose; to promote the great cause of sunday schools. The efforts of any individual, however wise or active he might be, would be productive of but little benefit, when compared with the good resulting from the combined exertions of *many* benevolent persons. Raikes might have laboured till the termination of his long life, surrounded by a few sunday scholars in the vicinity of his residence, had he not aroused the attention of his countrymen to his plans, and directed their energies to these institutions.

In detached situations, with different plans of instruction, and without any means of communicating with each other, sunday school teachers continued for a considerable time to proceed silently in their benevolent employment. But it was found that zeal thus private and retired would be likely soon to languish; improvements in education would be only partially known or adopted, and intelligence which might animate wavering exertion, direct inquiring benevolence, and promote more energetic and extensive plans for instruction, could not be generally communicated by any existing mediums. Hence the necessity of a sunday school union, in which gratuitous teachers from different schools might assemble to encourage and direct each other in their arduous labours.

This becoming the subject of conversation at a prayer meeting among some sunday school teachers, who were much impressed with a sense of the importance of the object and its practicability, they resolved to call a meeting of the teachers and friends of sunday schools to consider this subject more at large, and to adopt measures for carrying it into execution. Accordingly, on the 13th July, 1803, a numerous assembly was convened at Surry Chapel school rooms. The subject excited considerable attention, its expediency and usefulness were generally acknowledged, and the fundamental rules of the society were formed.

We shall not stop here to discuss the benefits of *Unions*, but would

quote the following facts, which show the result in a few instances in England.

	Scholars reported.	Scholars reported.
Nottingham S. S. U. in 1810, 4834 in 1825, 23,240		
Hampshire . . do. . . 1810, 1743 do. 7,116		
Sheffield . . . do. . . 1813, 3186 do. 11,182		
Bath do. . . 1813, 864 do. 5,668		
Increase in Four Unions 36,579		
	47,206	47,206

Sunday schools have, in a particular manner, prepared the way for the operations of the Bible Society; and, as all denominations unite in diffusing the scriptures, they should surely join in bestowing the ability to read them; for the gift of a Bible to those persons who are incapable of reading it, would be like presenting a warrior's sword to the helpless babe: the untaught are unable to wield that mighty weapon, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Let the friends of the Bible and of the youth of our land concur in their labours of love. Let a sunday school union be established in every county, and we have no doubt that it will be found most delightful and beneficial. Sunday school unions strengthen the bonds of brotherly love: they prevent languishing schools from declining; and lead to the establishment of new schools in situations which require them. They are eminently calculated to advance one of the best causes—the religious instruction of the young, by one of the best means—the pious and disinterested exertions of Christians: who, by union of strength and division of labour, act with greater energy and success. We are persuaded, that if sunday school unions were universally established, the beneficial consequences would be incalculably great to the present rising generation, and their advantages would be perpetuated throughout future ages; but it is eternity alone that can fully develop the blessed results of sunday schools and sunday school unions.

The total numbers reported to the London Sunday School Union up to the 1st of May, 1825, were,

	Scholars.	Teachers.	Scholars.
In Great Britain	5,764	62,447	666,535
In Ireland . . .	1,967	12,837	171,492
Total . .	7,731	75,284	838,027

We shall now pass to Ireland, and remark some of the circumstances connected with the origin and progress of sunday schools in that interesting island, whose emigrated population form a number of our adopted fellow citizens.

We do not know at what time they were introduced, but it is probable that some of these institutions were formed in a private manner, soon after their commencement in England, but no general efforts were made till November, 1809, when the Sunday School Society for Ireland was organized. The object of this very important society is, to disseminate most approved plans of instruction, and to supply spelling-books and the scriptures gratuitously, or at reduced prices, to sunday schools throughout Ireland, without any interference with their internal management.

The following statement, taken from the latest report of the society, will show the progressive increase in the number of its schools, from the period of its establishment in November, 1809, to the last year.

	Schools.	Scholars.
1810 Nov.	2	87
1811 Do.	44	5,172
1813 April,	117	15,800
1814 Do.	175	23,529
1815 Do.	252	28,598
1816 Do.	335	37,590
1817 Do.	418	49,981
1818 Do.	522	57,819
1819 Do.	762	81,114
1820 Do.	1,021	108,774
1821 Do.	1,247	127,897
1822 Do.	1,395	144,848
1823 Do.	1,519	149,782
1824 Do.	1,640	157,184
1825 Do.	1,702	150,831

Sunday schools have been established in Ireland by other societies, the principal of which is the London Hibernian Society, which, in 1825, contained 17,145 scholars.

The next subject that we shall notice is the establishment of adult schools by the benevolent efforts of the Rev. Thomas Charles, A. B. episcopal minister of Bala, Merioneth-

shire, in the summer of 1811. The following is an extract of a characteristic letter from Mr. Charles, to the Secretary of the Hampshire Sunday School Union, dated April 2, 1812.

"DEAR SIR,

"Observing the date of your last, I am ashamed and grieved it has been so long by me unnoticed. My only apology must be, my continual engagements. It seems to me, at times, as if the Lord had given me work to do, without proportional time to accomplish it. However, God forbid I should complain of the accumulation of the most noble and important work in the world, without the success of which we may as well have no world to live in—if this does not succeed, the success of all other engagements is vain. I am happy to find, by your letter, that your spirits are invigorated to proceed with the blessed work of instructing the rising generation, notwithstanding the obstacles you have met with. My maxim has been, for many years past, to aim at great things, but if I cannot accomplish great things, to do what I can, and to be thankful for the least success; and still to follow on, without being discouraged at the day of small things, or by unexpected reverses. For many years, I have laid it down as a maxim to guide me, *never to give up a place in despair of success*. If one way does not succeed, new means must be tried; and if I see no increase this year, perhaps I may the next. I almost wish to blot the word *impossible* out of my vocabulary, and to obliterate it out of the minds of my brethren—my fellow-labourers. Our enemy is a vanquished foe; resist him, and he will flee from you. Surely we may safely rely on the promise of him who is Almighty, and hath promised to be with us always.

"Observing and bewailing the great number of illiterate grown-up and old people in our poor country, I have in different places established Sunday schools exclusively for them, having another in the same place for children, telling them at the same time, that we meant to be urgent upon them—never cease to press them to attend until they came. By

kindness and importunateness we have succeeded far beyond our most sanguine hopes. We have six of these schools for the aged set up within these three or four months, and some hundreds have learnt, and are learning to read. By condescension, kindness, and patience, they have been engaged to learn, and their desire for learning soon became as great as any we have seen among the young people. They have their little elementary books with them often whilst at work, and meet in the evenings, of their own accord, to teach one another. The rumour of the success of these schools has spread abroad, and has greatly removed the discouragement which old people felt from attempting to learn, from the general persuasion, that they could not learn at their age. This has been practically proved to be false, for old people of seventy-five years of age have learnt to read in these schools, to their great comfort and joy. I dare not vouch positively for the conversion of any of them; but I can say, that they are much improved in their moral conduct and attendance on the means of grace. They lament with tears their former ignorance, and rejoice they can read, and repeat *memoriter* a few verses of the Bible given them to learn. In some degree their blind minds are enlightened; and their hearts are impressed by divine truths, until they are greatly melted into tears of joy, mixed with sorrow—Pray for them! I began these schools for five aged in my own neighbourhood, but mean to drive them on, and set them up in all parts of the country, as soon as I possibly can.

"I am happy to inform you also for your encouragement, that in several districts, very great, and powerful, and general awakenings have broke out, since the beginning of last winter, among the children and young people attending the Sunday schools. Above 140 have joined one society within these three months past. I visited them last month; a hundred on a week-day met me to be publicly catechised. They are of all ages, from five to thirty, and their number is so great as to include

nearly all the young people in the district. I catechised them before all the country, and their responses in every instance were scriptural, and intelligent, always confirmed by a passage of scripture. I did not confine myself to one subject only; but asked them questions upon every subject of importance in the Christian religion, to see whether they had obtained a clear connected view of them, and in every instance I was highly satisfied. Their appearance was solemn and serious, often much affected. The work goes on there, not like tugging and rowing a flat in dead waters, but like a ship sailing in full tide, with all her sails up, and the wind powerfully filling them. My own mind experienced such impressions whilst among them, as can never be obliterated. I thought it more than abundant recompense for all my labours these twenty-six years past, in endeavouring to instruct the young people of our poor country. Not unto us!—Not unto us!—But to thy name, O Lord, be all the glory. I wish you success in the name of the Lord. I shall be always glad to hear from you. Pray for, dear sir, your unworthy, but faithful servant,

“THOMAS CHARLES.”

“P. S. I endeavour to go on in a wholesale way. I publicly address the whole country; press all to attend the schools, either to teach or to be taught. By persevering in this plan, I have gained upon the population in general to a great extent; in some districts all attend, without any exception.”

In a letter to Dr. Pole, dated January 4, 1814, Mr. Charles says, “We had no particular school for their instruction *exclusively* till the summer of 1811, though many attended the sunday schools with the children, in different parts of the country, previous to that time. What induced me first to think of establishing such an institution, was the aversion I found in the adults to associate with the children in their schools. The first attempt succeeded wonderfully, far beyond my most sanguine expectation, and still continues in a most prosperous state. The report of the

success of this school soon spread over the country, and, in many places, the illiterate adults began to *call for instruction*. In one county, after a public address had been delivered to them on that subject, the adult poor, even the aged, flocked to the sunday schools in crowds; and the shopkeepers could not immediately supply them with an adequate number of spectacles. Our schools, in general, are kept in our chapels; in some districts, where there are no chapels, farmers, in the summer-time, lend their barns. The adults and children are sometimes in the same room, but placed in different parts of it. When their attention is gained and fixed, they soon learn; their age makes no great difference if they are able, by the help of glasses, to see the letters. As the adults have no time to lose, we endeavour (before they can read) to instruct them without delay in the first principles of Christianity. We select a short portion of Scripture, comprising in plain terms the leading doctrines, and repeat them to the learners till they can retain them in their memories; and which they are to repeat the next time we meet.

“It is impossible for me, at present, to ascertain the number of adults in the schools: in many districts they all attend; and the beneficial effects of them are every where observed.”

Some of the earliest separate adult sunday schools were formed at Bristol, by a philanthropist in humble life, William Smith, whose efforts were efficiently supported by Stephen Prust, Esq. a pious and benevolent merchant of that city. In 1813, a regular and efficient society was formed, which continues to the present time. Many similar societies have been established in various places throughout the country. We shall rejoice when the *necessity* for adult schools ceases, but till that time, we trust they will be continued with spirit and perseverance.

It is manifestly a great advantage for adults to be taught in schools by themselves. Wherever adult schools have been established, it has been found difficult to secure a regular attendance, and therefore many at-

tempts have failed. It is highly desirable, that those persons who have not had the advantage of youthful instruction, should now be taught to read the Holy Scriptures without any further delay; and it is an encouraging circumstance, proved by numerous facts, that if adults have a real desire to learn, they make much more rapid progress than children, and, in fact, can commonly learn to read the Testament in six months.

In order to show that even aged adults can learn to read, we beg to state the following facts extracted from the Report of the Gainsborough Adult school society:

"An old woman, aged 94, at Ipswich workhouse, without spectacles, made better progress than the juniors, one of whom she undertook to instruct. A woman at Manchester, who, to use her own words, "wanted only two years of 100," went to a boys' school and received instruction from one of the monitors; she reads in the school in an audible manner. In Gloucestershire, an old woman, aged 73, and her husband, aged 80, were soon taught to read easy scripture. The husband had been an immoral man, and a great boxer, but is now an improved character, and says, the Scripture verses afford him great comfort when he lies awake in the night. Dr. Pole mentions a child teaching its grandfather, while sitting upon his knee. The following communication is from Ireland: Scenes like the following are truly interesting. In a village, where lately the Scriptures were unknown, I found a venerable man, nearly 100 years old, sitting on a large stool, with a bible in his hand, and many of his neighbours, who after their labour, had come to hear him read. Two grandchildren were at his knee, teaching him; and as the poor old man went on reading in a faltering manner, they would occasionally correct him, saying, "stop, grandfather, that is not the right word, this is the word." The aged instructing the young, is a familiar sight, but here, hoary age lamenting the want of learning, condescends to receive it of the third generation. Often have children been

instrumental in awakening in their parents a concern for salvation; a precious return for parental care, and like the above, an example of that rare class of phenomena, in which a superlative beauty arises from an inversion of the general order of nature. At Glencalvie, in the islands of Scotland, the people flocked in crowds to the schools; from the veteran Iverach, in his 117th year, to (literally speaking) the infant in its cradle; for a mother had brought her infant in a cradle to the school, that she might not be prevented from attending. The old soldier *entered the army in 1715, and entered the school as a scholar, in 1815.* After learning the alphabet, he was taught to connect short words, when his sight began to fail him."

(To be continued.)

REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

Revivals of religion are continuing to multiply and progress in various sections of our country.

Of the revival which has been previously mentioned in Machias in the State of Maine, the latest account states that "Ninety-five had then joined the Congregational church, and 21 the Baptist. Numbers more will doubtless join both churches, as those who have a hope are computed, at somewhere not far from 170. In Colombia and Addison, on Pleasant River, the season past, it is thought that rising of 100 have passed from death unto life. In Cooper, beyond and back of Machias, the converts have been numerous, considering the few inhabitants. It was contemplated gathering a Congregational church there.

It has been before stated that a revival had commenced in the town of Prospect on Penobscot Bay. Of this work it is said, "Twenty-six were admitted to the Congregational church, 11 of whom were males, and 9 of the males heads of families.—Numbers more have obtained a hope, and numbers are yet anxious.

In Belfast, 30 persons have united with the Congregational church and 15 with the Methodist, as fruits of the revival there.

In the town of Green, which lies back of Belfast, 68 persons have united with the Baptist Church, as fruits of a revival which commenced there about the middle of November last.

By a recent account of the revival in Burlington, Vermont, we learn that "the hopeful subjects of the work are between 60 and 70, 44 of whom have united with the church, besides a considerable accession by letter, in consequence of the excitement." About the time this revival commenced the students of the College were on the point of dispersing for the winter vacation. Before the dispersion however, one of the tutors became a decided subject of regenerating grace; and in the town of Georgia where he spent the winter, was the apparent instrument of a powerful work of the Holy Spirit. In regard to the means used at the commencement of the work, it is remarked, "there has indeed been praying among us—a great amount of praying—and in this as usual, pious females have been decidedly in the advance."

In Mount Holley, Vt. there is a revival, of which it is said, "the Lord is carrying on his work in this town with power. There have been between 40 and 50 hopeful conversions within a short time past."

† It is also stated, "that there is now a good work of the Lord going on in the town of Pawlet, Vt. The work commenced about the first of December, and is now very general through the town. It is thought that sixty have passed from death unto life, and the attention is increasing. In Dorset also are some promising indications of a revival, and a few have been brought to rejoice in the Lord."

If we pass into New York we find that the work of reformation is spreading rapidly and powerfully in that state. At Rome on one Sabbath, about the first of March, nearly 200 persons were admitted into the Church as subjects of the powerful revival in that place.—The day was solemn, and a large collection of people attended the meeting.

In Camden, says a recent account, a most powerful revival has commenced. Four of the most stubborn opposers of the work attended a prayer

meeting there, and hopefully experienced a saving change before they left the house. While Christians, were yet praying, the answer came. Also in Utica, many are inquiring and some rejoicing. A letter says, "it is a time of very general solemnity there." I might add that Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes are no small sharers in this work of grace.

There is also a revival in Manlius, N. Y. of which it is said in the Western Recorder:—"Our readers will be gratified to learn, that a revival has commenced in the Rev. Mr. Cushman's congregation in the village of Manlius, Onondaga county. The work has but lately commenced; and for a time its influences, we believe, were quite limited. We however learn from a letter, that the work increases, and that 23 were admitted into the church, two or three sabbaths since."

"A revival," says the same paper, "has commenced in Boonsville, Oneida co. N. Y. at a place where there is as yet no established religious society; and where error and irreligion have been greatly predominant. One or two praying souls seem to have been blessed in a remarkable manner as instruments in the work. Nothing is too hard for the Lord."

In the town of Lee, in the same county, about 50 are subjects of a revival which has but just commenced in our section of the town.

In Hamilton, N. Y. the seat of the Baptist Theological Seminary, a work of grace has been gradually advancing since October last. Of the subjects twenty-two have united with the Baptist Church.

It is also stated that at Buffalo, there is a revival, and that a considerable number are about to join the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches.

A revival has been experienced in a Baptist Society in Randolph, Ms. and 15 have been added to the church. About the commencement of the revival, the church unanimously observed a day of fasting and prayer. This was blessed to the immediate awakening, and eventually to the conversion of a man, who had been for more than twenty years, a

professed Universalist, and an enemy to experimental religion.

In regard to the revival in Williamstown, the latest account we have received is dated March 19—which states that the work goes on powerfully, especially in the College—17 or 18 only remained unconverted out of 95 students now present.

In Lanesborough, Ms. a revival has commenced which is principally confined to an Episcopal Society, in which are a considerable number of hopeful conversions.

"We understand," says the Religious Intelligencer, "that a work of grace has recently commenced in Glastenbury in this state, (Con.) and that a goodly number (about 60) have been hopefully renewed—that many others are inquiring the way to Zion."

In the several churches in Charleston, S. C. there has been an unusual awakening for several weeks past; 50 or more, according to the notice of it in a Charleston paper, possess a hope in Christ.—*N. H. Rep.*

INFANTS' SCHOOLS.

(Continued from page 125.)

The remarks which have been hitherto made on the subject of instruction in an infants' school have related to the cultivation of the mind and the improvement of its faculties. It is impossible, I would hope, to doubt, that if their education were to be confined, even within these limits, the children would, in many important particulars, be far better prepared for the schools to which they may be afterwards sent, than they could be without the intervention of such an establishment.

Catechism.—If, for instance, it were proposed to the superintendent of an infants' school to instruct his pupils in a catechism; he would not commence his instruction by obliging them to commit to their memory the words, which they could not possibly understand; but, by the most simple and easy lessons, he would first endeavour to communicate to their minds the intention of the several clauses of the sentence.

The Scriptures.—In applying the

same course of remark to the sacred volume, the range which is before us is far more extensive.

The knowledge of the scriptures is one of the principal objects of the instruction in our sunday schools. To this point, also, the education followed in the infants' schools is directed, almost without the hope that any more than the first class at most, shall be able to read any part of them with propriety. The mind of the infant is, however, constantly preparing for this desirable acquisition. In order to aid them in the technical use of the sacred volume, they commit to memory the names and the order of the various books; the number of chapters in each, and, in some instances, the principal subjects of the chapters. As an aid to the formal understanding of the contents of the scriptures, they are introduced to a knowledge of the narratives which are there to be found; the natural history of its animals; and its various tables, as compared with our own modes of calculation. And it is presumed, that it may lead to a farther understanding of their purpose and intention, when they are informed of some of the more simple customs of the eastern countries; when the emblems and figures of scripture are brought before their eyes in the course of nature around them; and when the events of their own life are adduced, as illustrative of some of its more important truths and commands.

Arithmetic.—We may follow the same course of remark concerning the subject of arithmetic.

With the exception of the first class, which should, as much as possible, be assimilated to those of the higher schools, arithmetic, as such, does not form part of this system. It is proposed, rather to prepare the mind of the children for this study, than to communicate the art itself. For this purpose, the principal effort which is made, is in the learning of number in its more simple combinations and proportions. Short calculations, which may be made without the aid of the pencil, will naturally follow upon this, both as an exercise of the power which has been communicated in the acquirement of num-

ber, and as a nearer approach to the art.

To these are added, the various useful tables which must be committed to the memory, before any progress in arithmetic can be made.

It will be perceived, that the first of the foregoing processes, the acquirement of number, confers a two-fold benefit. It strengthens the mind itself, expands the faculties, and is an easy mode of exciting the learner to the exercise of thought, while it prepares him, in the most effectual manner, for the arithmetical art. The latter has principal reference to his progress in higher schools.

Writing.—It may be said of writing also, with the same exception of the first class, that as a distinct art it does not form part of the system of infant education. Letters may be reduced to elementary forms, which may be traced by the eye of a child, and imitated without any considerable effort. He will thus have acquired almost insensibly, the incipency of the art itself; and when it may be thought right thus far to instruct him, he will with perfect ease proceed to form and to combine the letters of the alphabet, and to write.

It will not be imagined, I presume, that it is proposed in this system, to place the subjects which have been mentioned indiscriminately before the minds of all the little assembly which may have met under the roof of an infants' establishment. The children are admitted into these schools from the age of eighteen months, to that of their entrance into higher schools, which is generally six or seven. They are therefore under the guidance of their first teacher during an average period of four years. If he be judicious, it will be in his bosom to arrange the subjects of instruction according to their age and capacities, and the progress of their education. On the first admission of a child, it may occupy some considerable period, for the little mind to accustom itself to the novel circumstances around it, and to catch the idea of the purpose for which it is there introduced. Quiet observation will soon assist the teacher in determining the place which the infant is to hold in

the order of the system; and he will not think the time lost, if weeks, or even months, are at first passed over without further progress than is made in the acquirement of order and attention. The first thing which will mark the opening intellect will be effort without success. When the child has, however, fixed his own place, and begins to manifest a propensity for one or another of the subjects which are successively proposed to him in the constantly recurring action of the school; the progress will be easy and natural through the whole course to the higher classes, and to subjects of more difficult attainment.

Health.—I have placed health among the principal objects of a superintendent of an infants' school, not only because this is confessedly of the very first importance in children of the age to be admitted into these institutions, but also because the purposes of the system cannot possibly be answered without it. The system fails when the little assembly begins to lose the influence of vivacity and cheerfulness, and a lesson is not rightly taught if it have not been received with real pleasure by the pupil. With a view then to this excellent object, muscular action is made a component and necessary part of the system. Every lesson is accompanied with some movement of the person. And these movements are so varied, that, in turn, the whole frame is at different periods called into action and restored to rest. The beat of the foot, the clap with the hands, the extension of the arms, with various other postures, are measures of the utterance of the lesson as they proceed. The position is also frequently changed. The infants learn sitting, standing, or walking. And when the lesson has ceased, and there is a pause before the commencement of that which is to follow, the period is given either to absolute rest and silence, to some simple air, or to the performance of some evolution, under the guidance and after the example of the monitor of their class. For a similar purpose a play-ground or garden is attached, wherever that may be possible, to the school-room; and for half an hour during each

school time, when the weather is suitable, the little flock is turned out for amusement and play. There are, indeed, many of the lessons in which their minds are called into action, which may as well, and even with better effect, during the months of the summer, be taught in the open air, within view of the book of nature. But should the weather be unfavourable to these recreations and this mode of instruction, the ample space of the school-room affords every opportunity for sufficient exercise, and especial care is at all times taken to replenish it with the purest atmosphere without exposing the little assembly to draughts.

I may add to the foregoing, as in its measure conducive to the increase of the health of the infants, the frequently recurring lessons of cleanliness which are given to them. In order to infix the idea and the love of it on their mind, the process of the morning purification is formed into an imitative lesson, which they perform unitedly, in cadence, to expressions similar to the following: "This is the way we wash our hands; this is the way we wash our face."

The success of these attempts to confirm the health of the infants, in the establishments whose system we now consider, is not any longer a question of theory. They have stood the test of experience, and the result has been in every respect satisfactory. With the exception of the peculiar diseases of children, whose absence no system can possibly secure, health and cheerfulness have universally followed upon a constant attendance of the children at these institutions.

(To be continued.)

WESTERN UNION.

Letter from the Rev. S. W. Brace, Corresponding Secretary of the Western Sunday School Union, dated Utica, April 17th, 1826.

DEAR SIR,

The numerous and pressing duties of my station during the glorious outpouring of the Spirit upon the inhabitants of this place, have prevented me from sending forward a report of

the Western Sunday School Union until this late period—and even now, we shall be unable to give you any thing like a full and correct report: we can only note such facts as have incidentally come to hand since the last anniversary of the *Oneida Sunday School Union*. It was then that the *Western Union* was formed, which we designed should embrace all the counties in the vicinity of Oneida.

The cause of Sunday schools in this section of our state, has been, for a year or two past, rapidly increasing in interest; perhaps, no benevolent institution, at the present time, commands more general attention. Thus far our expectations respecting the western union have been more than answered; and we hope, under the blessing of God, that it will prove to be a vine, the branches of which, shall run over the wall of its *present* enclosure, and yield its pleasant fruits to the taste of many who are now passing by as strangers.

Several of the schools in our connexion have recently been visited with the refreshing influences of the Spirit. Many interesting anecdotes might be related, did our time and limits permit. Sufficient to say, that in one school, in which, at the period of its report in September last, there were ten teachers, and only one of them belonging, professedly, to the kingdom of Christ—they are now, all the hopeful subjects of renewing grace, together with many of the scholars.

In another school, in which there were eighteen teachers, (two of them only being pious) there are now twenty six, and but one who does not express a hope in the merits of the Redeemer. Many of the children also, are excited to sing, "Hosanna." About forty hopeful conversions have taken place in another school within three months past. In a late revival in this vicinity, more than 100 of the subjects had been members of the Sunday school. About 30 children and several of the teachers in another place, are already made to rejoice in God their Saviour, and the reviving work still goes on among them. In some instances Bible classes have participated largely in the effusions of

the Spirit. Sufficient to mention but one instance. In a class of 17 members, (young ladies,) all except *one*, have, within a few weeks past, become the hopeful daughters of Zion.

It is not in our power to state the precise number of conversions in our schools during the year past; say, 50 teachers and 200 scholars.

In the county of Cayuga, an union has recently been formed under promising prospects. In Auburn, the centre of this union, an impulse has been given to the cause, which indicates great utility in that section of our country.

The members of the Theological Seminary have taken a deep and decided interest in Sunday schools, and are thus preparing to spread widely the spirit of the cause, as they go forth to preach the gospel. Much the same may be said of the students at Hamilton College, in this vicinity.

Our monthly publication, "The W. S. S. Visitant," proves a powerful auxiliary to the good cause. About seven hundred copies are issued, and the patronage of the work is rapidly increasing.

During the past year, several agents have been in our employ, to explore the territory embraced within our limits, and to "spy out the nakedness" of some parts "of the land." Much good has been accomplished by their faithful and zealous efforts.

Our depository is well supplied with books from the parent institution—here, unusual interest is excited in favour of *libraries* among our schools. A second edition of 5000 copies of Parmelee's Questions has lately been published; and our managers have also published, "A System of Directions for the Internal Government of Sunday Schools." "A System of Sunday School Instruction, designed principally for public examinations," has been published by Auburn School, No. 2, which promises much utility.

We have probably now within our limits, about 200 schools, embracing about 1500 teachers, and 8000 scholars. This we think a moderate estimate.

One improvement which has been made in our schools is, limiting the

scholars to a given lesson, and making this lesson the same for all the classes. This mode has many advantages over the one formerly practised; and especially, as the teachers may assemble on an evening in the week, and examine together, the lesson which is to come before the school on the approaching sabbath. Some of the schools at the west of us chose to hold a direct relation to the parent society, and therefore, do not fall within the limits of our report.

May the presence and blessing of our common Saviour, crown your labours of love in behalf of the rising generation.

PRIMER.

THE UNION PRIMER; or first book for children. Compiled for the Sunday School Union, and fitted for the use of Schools in the United States. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord," &c. 36 pp. 18mo. American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia, 1826. Price 4 cents, with the usual discount to auxiliaries.

The first step in any enterprise is generally so important as to have a decided influence on its whole future course; and a good beginning is justly accounted, even by a common proverb, one half the action. In no pursuit, perhaps, is this principle more forcibly true, than in education, and those who have ever paid any regard to this subject, have considered a first book for children a matter of primary importance. The difficulties which arise in the first stage of instruction, are distressing to children, and often induce the parent, or the benevolent teacher, to abandon a labour which has in it so little to please, and which is always toilsome and embarrassing. The difficulties ever attendant on this essential and yet unpleasing labour, are so obviously great, that the world has had hundreds of forms presented to it, and yet there seems room for improvement. Almost every person who has attempted to teach the art of reading has, we presume, tried in succession, various books, and at last selected one, not so much because it was well

adapted to the purpose, as because it was the least objectionable. Under impressions of this kind, a friend of our society seeing the very glaring deficiency in this part of Sunday school teaching, has compiled the work which we now present to our schools and to the public.

Although it would be gross presumption to affirm, that what has heretofore been accomplished only with various degrees of imperfection, is now presented complete and faultless; yet it were as glaring affectation, in giving our opinion, not to say, we think it superior to any book of the kind that we have seen. If it were not so, we would not adopt it, for there is no want of a supply of this class of books; every bookseller almost has his standard work, and is ready to furnish it at prices so low as to deter competition.

The first and grand point in a work of this kind is, to make the business of learning to read *easy*: the next object, and one not a moment to be forgotten, is the *sentiment* imparted. All the books we have examined, we think defective in the first particular. The type is too small, or too much crowded; the words too long, and those not in use—and the sentiments such as will not engage the attention of children. They are generally such as they cannot understand, or such as are not in the train of their common thoughts. The attention must be engaged, or education is a rack, alike distressing to the instructor, and tormenting to the child. The second object, viz: the sentiment of the lessons, we do not find so greatly defective, for every school book at the present day, must have at least a fair show of morality. But the sentiments, too generally, are of a dull and unentertaining nature.

There is a class of books, at the head of which, we place the Union Spelling Book, published by the London Sunday School Union, as the best of the kind; in which the sentences are most admirable in themselves: they are maxims of the noblest philosophy, and the purest religion; yet they are not fit for children who are just leaving their *a-b*, *abs*. They are mere abstract truths, on which it

is almost impossible to fix the attention of children so young as those generally are, who are learning their letters. As truths, they are to be inculcated most certainly, and strange must be the views of that instructor who can teach a child to read, and never teach him the existence, the attributes, and the providence of God, or the great salvation through the blood of Christ. As, however, the first grand object, as before observed, is to make the art of reading an easy attainment, the attention is chiefly to be directed to this point. Make a man familiar with the use of tools, and then you may set him at difficult work; open to a child the avenues of knowledge, let him see through the medium, before you embarrass him with various objects. So we say, teach a child first to read, and the ability to read with ease, will enable him soon to comprehend with ease.

Having said thus much of the faults of other early books, we will bring forward the excellences of that now presented. In its general appearance, the Union Primer is certainly the most engaging work of the kind we have seen, being ornamented with 44 pictures, in the best style of wood engraving. The type is large and very clear, and the general arrangement pleasing to the eye. This is one quality of no small moment, as every teacher of infants can testify.

The labour of committing to memory long columns of unconnected or senseless spelling lessons, which are so apt to beget disgust in the little people, whom it is our aim to introduce into the paths of knowledge, have been avoided. Simple reading lessons, in words of two letters, follow the syllable pages, and then are continued in words of single syllables, to the sixteenth page, in short sentences and stories of things familiar to the minds of children, and fitted to engage and amuse the youngest learners. This must lead them on with more ease and success, than the painful work of poring over such words as, *abase*, *abandon*, &c. &c.

For the benefit of those who adhere to the use of the spelling lessons, there is arranged through the book, in small sections, a catalogue of

words, which is stated, on good authority, to contain nearly two thirds of all the words to be found in any ordinary book; certainly, of more profit than whole pages of words which are scarcely ever seen or uttered in common intercourse. The book is designed for use, and there is no display of a systematic arrangement of words and sounds. Such things may well form a part of a higher branch of education, and is left to the philologist. The aim is not to teach the philosophy of language, but the simple use of letters. The Lord's prayer, the commandments, and a judicious selection of scripture maxims from the Old and New Testaments, stamp the whole with a Christian character. *Other than this will never do for education.* The book is closed with a picture of the peaceful reign of the Messiah, together with a plain and simple explanation of that glorious promise which God has made, and with a view to prosper which, this little book has been compiled, and cast as a mite into the treasury.

THE NEW YORK FEMALE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION SOCIETY,

Held their anniversary meeting on Wednesday morning, 19th ult. The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Knox, of the Reformed Dutch Church. The report was read by the Rev. Mr. Chase of the Methodist church. The Rev. Mr. McCartee of the Presbyterian church, then delivered an address. The premiums, awarded to the scholars, were presented by the Rev. Mr. Cone of the Baptist church, and the meeting was concluded with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Milnor of the Episcopal church.

From an abstract of the report, which has been put into our hands by the secretary, we learn the following facts. In one of the schools, where, by a former report, it appeared that only *seven* of the teachers were pious, it is now stated that not that number out of the thirty-three can be found, who have not publicly owned the name of Jesus. A number of deaths have occurred during the year, both of adult scholars and others; several

of whom have died in the faith of the gospel and in the triumphs of the cross.

One new school has been opened at Tompkinsville, Staten Island, which makes the number in the union 35. These are attended by 2,642 scholars, and instructed by 408 teachers. 91,078 verses of scripture, and 2,836 scripture proofs, have been committed to memory, with M'Dowell's questions, catechisms and hymns innumerable. 34 Bibles, 10 Testaments, and 48 Psalm and Hymn Books, and a large number of small books, have been given as rewards. 30 of the best scholars received the highest reward conferred by this society. 23 teachers and 28 scholars have joined the church. Total number received in church communion in 10 years, 563.

NEW YORK PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The ninth anniversary of this institution, comprising the schools of 13 of the Episcopal churches, was celebrated in St. Paul's Chapel on Wednesday afternoon, at 4 o'clock.

This was indeed a most interesting celebration. Upwards of 1,300 male and female children, belonging to these schools were assembled, and with their respective superintendents and teachers, completely filled the ground floor of this spacious edifice. A large congregation of the friends of the institution, occupied the galleries, which were appropriated for their accommodation. Evening prayer was conducted by the Rev. Thomas Breintnall, Rector of Zion church, and an appropriate address delivered by the Rev. H. U. Onderdonk, Rector of St. Ann's Church, Brooklyn. The scholars then united with the congregation in singing, and the interesting and impressive services were closed with some appropriate collects, and the benediction by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Hobart, the President of the Society.

ESSEX COUNTY UNION.

The anniversary of the Essex County, N. J. Sabbath School Union was celebrated in this town on Wednesday last. The scholars belonging to

six of the sabbath schools in the town, agreeably to arrangements of the superintendents, assembled at the Baptist Church about ten o'clock, when they formed in procession with their teachers, and proceeded to the first Presbyterian Church, the place appointed for the annual meeting.

The day was fine; and the assemblage of so many children, by far the most numerous of any we ever before witnessed in this town on any occasion, accompanied by a respectable number of coloured people, part of whom were members of the school taught in the African Church, taking into view the object which had called them together, could not fail of exciting a lively interest in the minds of spectators, and especially of giving a most delightful tone to the feelings of every one engaged in the important business of sabbath school instruction. The spacious gallery of the Church, which was entirely occupied by the procession, was insufficient for the accommodation of the scholars and teachers, and a considerable number, about 200 we should judge, were obliged to seat themselves in the lower part of the house. Considering that so large a number of children were together, to help compose the audience, we think we may say it was remarkably still for the most part, especially among the females.

The exercises commenced at 11 o'clock, with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Magee, and singing the 100th Psalm. A very interesting report was then read by Mr. Ellison Conger, Secretary of the Union, which on account of its length it will be impracticable for us to publish in our paper. We hope however it will be printed and circulated among the schools in a pamphlet form. From the report it appears that the Union numbers 17 auxiliaries, 13 of which have handed in their reports: these 13 have had under their care during the year, 35 schools, containing 5060 scholars, 480 of whom are coloured people, conducted by 496 teachers and 43 superintendents, including assistants. The probable numbers connected with the 4 auxiliaries which have not reported, it is estimated, will increase the a-

mount to 39 schools, 3660 scholars and 645 teachers and superintendents. (The reports of four new auxiliaries were handed in at the close of the exercises.) The whole amount of receipts into the treasury is \$261 2 including \$182 50 received for books sold: expenditures, \$249: leaving a balance of \$11 2. This sum deducted from \$178 63, remaining due to the American Sunday School Union for books now in the depository, will leave the Union in debt the amount of \$167 61.

After the reading of the report, a number of resolutions were passed, in the proposing and seconding of which, interesting addresses were made by the Rev. Messrs. Dow of the Methodist Church, Winter of the Baptist Church, Taylor and VanSandvoort of the Dutch Reformed Church, Hay and Hamilton of the Presbyterian Church, and by J. C. Hornblower, Esq.

An alteration was made in the constitution, admitting schools in destitute places adjacent to this county, to the privilege of auxiliaries; and another, changing the time of the annual meeting to the first Wednesday in May.

A collection was taken up in behalf of the Union, amounting to \$29 25.

The public exercises were closed with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, and benediction by the Rev. Mr. Taylor.

ANNIVERSARY HYMNS.

The glorious universe around
The heavens with all their train,
Sun, moon, and stars, are firmly bound
In one mysterious chain.

The earth, the ocean, and the sky
To form one world agree,
Where all that walk, or swim, or fly,
Compose one family.

God in creation thus displays
His wisdom and his might,
While all his works with all his ways
Harmoniously unite.

In one fraternal bond of love,
One fellowship of mind,
His saints below and saints above
Their bliss and glory find.

Here, in their house of pilgrimage,
His statutes are their song;
There, through one bright eternal age,
His praises they prolong.

Lord, may our union form a part
Of this thrice happy whole,—
Receive its pulse from Thee the heart,
Its life from Thee the soul.

Accept our thanks, O God of truth!
Spared this returning day to see;
Still bless the guardian friends of youth,
Engaged to bring them up for Thee.

Oft have we felt thy gracious power,
And still to Thee we lift our eyes;
Now, give the Pentecostal shower,
Now, with thy Spirit all baptize.

As in times past, again appear;
Our cherish'd work increase, approve;
Our hearts reply,—Lo! God is here!
Behold the tokens of his love.

Smile on our union:—still the same
Our toils, our prospects and our end;
One hope, one heaven,—our only aim
The Saviour's kingdom to extend.

Thy servants, Jesus, prove and seal,
And bless this joyous day's return;
Stir up the fire of sacred zeal—
Stir up, and bid it ever burn:—

Till o'er the earth thy knowledge reach,
And triumphs wait redemption's plan;
Far as extends the human speech—
Wide as the family of man.

AUXILIARIES,

Recognised April 9th, 1826.

Lexington Bible Class and Sunday School Society of the First Baptist Church. William J. Smith, *Secretary*, Lexington, Ky.

Vergennes Sunday School Society, Rev. Alexander Lovell, *President*, Dea. Jona. Huntingdon, *Vice Presi-*

dent. F. Huntingdon and J. S. Shepherd, *Managers*. William R. Bixby, Esq. P. M. *Treasurer* and *Secretary*, Vergennes, Vert.

Philipsburg Sunday School. Mrs. Sophia Phillips, *President*. John Mitchell and Jacob Teste *Vice Presidents*. William Bagshaw, *Treasurer*. Rev. John Vandever, *Secretary*, Philipsburg, Pa.

New Hope Sunday School. Samuel Archibald, *President*. Abner A. Steele, *Vice President*. Arthur C. Story, *Secretary* and *Treasurer*, Clairborne, Green County, Alabama.

Maine Sabbath School Union. His Ex. Albion K. Parris, *President*. Rev. Jeremiah Chaplin, Robert H. Gardiner, and Rev. Allen H. Cobb, *Vice Presidents*. Rev. Asa Cummings, Rev. James Lewis, Capt. Daniel Nelson, Rev. P. S. Ten Broeck, Rev. Joshua Taylor, Rev. Samuel Rand, Stephen Waite, Rev. John R. Smith, Joseph Adams, Esq., Arthur Shirley, Simon Greenleaf, Esq. and Joseph Libby, *Managers*. Rev. Thomas B. Ripley, *R. Secretary*. William Cutter, *Corresponding Secretary*, Portland, Me.

Venango County Sunday School Union. Andrew Bowman, Esq. *President*. Benjamin Gardner, Andrew Bowman, John Evans, Levi Dodd, James Gilleland, James Mason, Jr. Alexr. M'Calmont, George M'Clelland and John Galbraith, *Managers*. Levi Dodd, *Secretary*, Franklin, Pa.

Notices and Acknowledgments.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The second anniversary of the American Sunday School Union, will be celebrated on Tuesday evening, the 23d inst. in the church on the south side of Washington Square, (the same place as last year,) in Philadelphia. The President, it is expected, will take the chair at 7 o'clock. The Annual Report of the Board of Managers, for the last year, will be read, and several addresses delivered by gentlemen from different parts of the United States. After the other exercises have been concluded, the election of 12 Managers, in place of those whose term of service expires, will take place.

It will be gratifying to the Managers to receive delegates from Auxiliary Societies, at the Union's House, No. 13 North Fourth Street, on Monday afternoon, the 22d inst. at 4 o'clock. Clergymen and delegates, who visit the city to attend the anniversary, and who are not otherwise provided with suita-

ble accommodations, are requested on their arrival, to make application to the *Corresponding Secretary, No. 13 North Fourth Street*, who will direct them to accommodations, free of expense.

E. W. SEELEY,
JOHN GODDARD,
JOSEPH P. ENGLES. } *Committee of Arrangements.*

*Sunday School Union's House,
Philada. April 24, 1826.*

Privileges of Members.—We have been requested to repeat the following information, viz: that persons who pay into the funds of the American Sunday School Union, "*thirty dollars at one time*," are constituted members for *life*, and are entitled to receive one copy (12 numbers a year,) of the American Sunday School Magazine, (this work,) *during life*, without any other charge; and, also, are privileged to purchase books, published by the American Sunday School Union, for their own use, or to give away, at the auxiliary prices, which at present are 25 per cent. discount from the prices on the printed catalogue. Persons who pay *three dollars* a year into the funds of the Society, are entitled to the same privileges as long as they continue such payments. The annual subscriptions become due on the first of January, in each year. *Catalogues* of the Society's publications can be had, gratis, at the Depository. Persons ordering books, should state the *edition*, (2d, 3d, or 4th, &c.) and it will then be sufficient to write merely the *number* which stands against the article wanted, in the catalogue: thus, "*Catalogue, 4th Ed. 100 of No. 1, 20 of No. 400*," &c.

Particular directions, should in all cases be given, as to the manner in which parcels should be forwarded, and orders written in a fair hand with good ink.

Missionaries.—The following gentlemen have been appointed Missionaries or agents, to promote the establishment of sabbath schools, the formation of auxiliary societies, and to collect funds, viz: Mr. THOMAS L. JANEWAY, in the counties north of Philadelphia, and Mr. JAMES M'CREARY, in the counties west of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania; and Mr. JAMES CRAWFORD, in New Jersey. We hope the friends of sunday schools, in the towns and villages which they may visit, will entertain, and render them all the aid in their power, in prosecuting the important objects of their mission.

The Primer.—In another part of this number will be found, a notice of the "*Union Primer*," which has been prepared with great care by a member of the board. The compiler presented the stereotype plates of the work to the Union, on condition that *twenty-five cents* on each *hundred copies* sold, should be appropriated to the "*Missionary Fund*." The board, at their last meeting, accepted this generous offer, on the terms proposed, and passed a vote of thanks to the donor, not only for the plates, but for his valuable services in compiling a work most admirably adapted for the use of children.

Reports of Auxiliaries.—The secretaries of auxiliary schools or societies, who have not transmitted their reports, are requested to forward them to "*the Corresponding Secretary of the American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia*," without delay. It is of the utmost importance, that the managers should have full information from each auxiliary, to enable them to prepare a correct annual report, to be presented to the society at the annual meeting, on the 23d inst.

Accommodation of Delegates.—The committee of arrangements for the anniversary of the American Sunday School Union, will be particularly obliged to any friend of the society, who can accommodate delegates from auxiliaries, free of expense, during their stay in the city, to leave his name and residence at the Book Store, No. 13 North Fourth Street, and state the number of persons they are willing to entertain. The committee feel confident, that ample provision will thus be made for the comfortable accommodation of any number of clergymen and gentlemen, who may favour the society with their presence, as delegates from auxiliaries, at the approaching anniversary.